

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 remain pending in this application. Claims 1-15 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

Claims 2-3, 5-8 and 10-15 are objected to because of minor informalities. These claims have been amended to overcome the informalities.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 2-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully assert that amended claims 2-8 comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

In particular, in amended claims 2-3, the "first information" is information sent from the first terminal device and the "second information" is information sent from the second terminal device. Further, each of the first and second information is set forth as including identification information and object information. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 9 and 12-15 are rejected under 37 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ilan et al., U.S. Publication 2002/0059184 in view of Yuen, U.S. Publication 2005/0182759; claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ilan and Yuen in view of Inala et al., U.S. Publication 2003/0014489; claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ilan and Yuen in view of Wang et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,058,428; claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ilan and Yuen in view of Yoneda, U.S. Patent No. 6,002,832; and claims 4-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ilan, in view of Yuen and Emens et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,745,178. Applicants request reconsideration of the rejections for the following reasons.

With respect to the independent claims, independent claims 1 and 9 are rejected as being unpatentable over Ilan in view of Yuen; and independent claim 4 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ilan in view of Yuen and Emens. However, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1, 4 and 9 are patentable over the cited references.

As claimed, the invention includes that the first and second terminal devices send identification information to identify a displayed video image (for example, television video image or reproduced video image from a media player such as DVD) regarding the content of interest rendered by media (for example, channel number of a television program) and the object information including an information relevant to position or time of the object indicated from the displayed video image (for example, a coordinate in a video frame, or a particular frame of a plurality of video frames indicated by using a pointing device). Further,

the claimed invention sets forth that communication messages between the first and second terminal devices are allowed based on the identification and object information.

According to this invention, it is possible to exchange messages easily using online chat, for example, between users having common interests with respect to content from the media. In particular, according to the invention, since communication messages between users are allowed based on the claimed identification information and object information, it is unnecessary for the users to enter keywords to find partners for exchanging messages.

Ilan discloses a system and method that enables real-time communications between users across a computer network using URL information (see paragraphs 0023, 0027). For example, entering the key word "automobile" can be used to initiate communication, such as online instant messaging, between users who are both interested in this subject area. However, as described in paragraph 0007 in Ilan, this system requires a data string. As described paragraphs 0007 and 0008 in Ilan, the data string is a string of characters. That is, in Ilan's system, users need to enter a keyword as a data string (e.g., "automobile") to communicate between two or more users. Further, although Ilan discloses the phrase "interested in this subject area" (see paragraph 0008), the "subject area" means field or category regarding content of interest, and does not mean or indicate an object indicated by a user from a displayed video image.

In the present invention, since the first and second terminal devices transmit the identification information to identify the displayed video image and object information including information relevant to position or time of the object indicated from the displayed image, it is unnecessary to enter keywords to find partners for exchanging messages, such as

in online chat. That is, this invention uses identification information and object information instead of a character string to make a group for communicating between two or more users having a common interest.

Yuen is relied upon for disclosing a method or system for searching graphic or video files on the Internet using a computer. Also, Yuen discloses using identifier information related to graphic or video files to search graphic and video files. However, Yuen does not disclose allowing communication messages between two or more users through a computer network; and using the identification information and the object information indicated from a displayed video image by a user to achieve such communication. That is, the "identifier information" of Yuen is not equivalent to the "object information" set forth by Applicants, as made clear by the amended claims. Therefore, the combination of Ilan and Yuen does not render claims 1, 2, 9 and 12-15 unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Emens is relied upon for disclosing first and second users that transmit first and second query statements to a server (114). Then, the server (114) computes a measure of similarity between the first and second query statements. According to the method disclosed by Emens, multiple users that share a common interest can be identified so that users with similar interests can be automatically introduced (see line 21-39, column 2 and line 63-67, column 3). However, Emens also does not disclose or teach that the first and second terminal devices transmit the identification information and the object information, as claimed in claim 4. In Emens, like Ilan, the user needs to enter keywords (see line 17-23, column 5). In the present invention, since the first and second terminal devices send identification information to identify the displayed video image and the object information, it is unnecessary to input

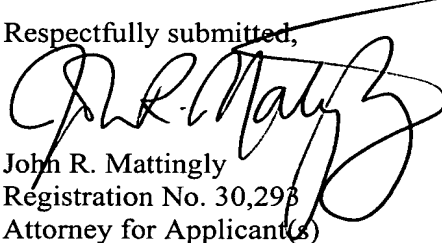
keywords to find partners for exchanging messages. Accordingly, the combination of Ilan, Yuen and Emens does not render claims 4-8 unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

With regard to Inala, which is applied to the invention of claim 3, Wang, which is applied to claim 10; and Yoneda, which is applied to claim 11, each of these references is insufficient to overcome the deficiencies as noted above in the Ilan, Yuen and Emens teachings. Accordingly, each of the dependent claims is patentable over the art of record, at least since each depends from an allowable base claim.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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